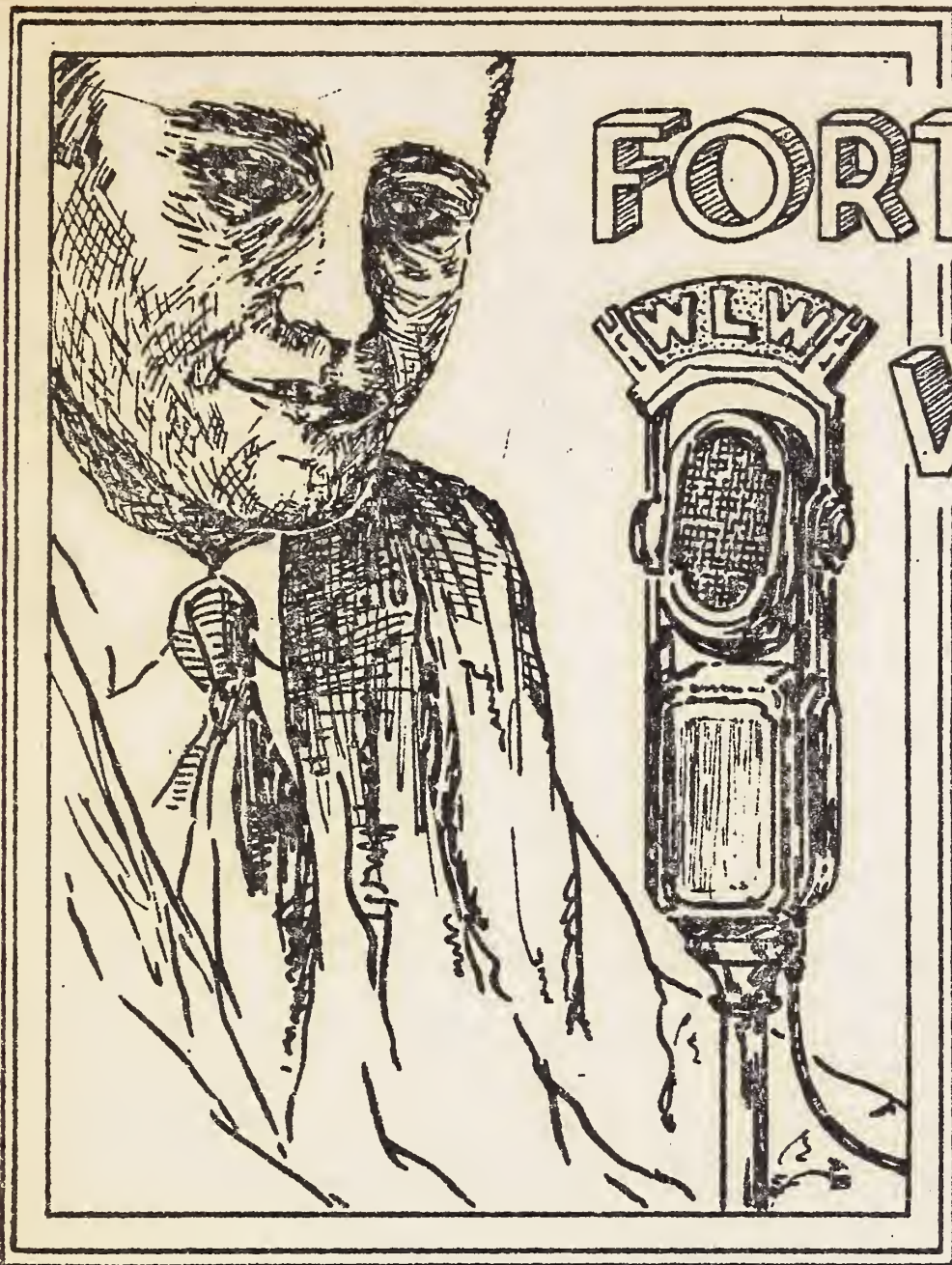


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AUG 20 1940



# FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

A Series of  
Dramatizations  
of Better  
Land Use

No. 121 August 17, 1940 1:15 p.m.

"A MONUMENT TO BEN"

W·L·W CINCINNATI

United States Department of Agriculture  
Soil Conservation Service  
Dayton · Ohio

U. S. Department of Agriculture  
Washington, D. C.

1937

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SOUND: Thunder and rain...

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

You won't find Lake Ohio on the map today, but once upon a time it stretched from Cincinnati to Chillicothe to Massillon to Pittsburgh, down the Monongahela to Fairmont, down the Kanawaha to Charleston, down the Licking to Falmouth. It was a great body of water, many centuries ago, when giant glaciers moved from the north to the Ohio country, ice movements that formed terraces along the valleys, graceful contours on the summits--ice movements that formed the soils of Hamilton County, Ohio--Hamilton County, home of Cincinnati.

ORGAN: Sneak in LITTLE OLD LADY

ANNOUNCER

Cincinnati was named for a farmer, Cincinnati, who left his farm to become a warrior and returned to his farm. It was only a small farm...but many a small farm gives life to Cincinnati. Such a farm is that of Mrs. Ida Meyer, out from Westwood. She has only a small farm...only a small farm, and courage.

NARRATOR

Some folks tell me to get off the farm...say it won't ever pay. I don't know about that. Maybe it won't, maybe it will. If hard work counts for anything, I know it will. And I know this much, we've got plenty of work to do to keep it going. We've been out on this farm 17 years now....17 years. Seems like only yesterday when my husband Ben....he passed on in 1933....Ben was looking for a farm...

SOUND: Automobile coming to stop, brakes applied, motor cuts off.



BEN (shouting)

Ida! Oh, Ida!

SOUND: Horn tooted...

IDA (fading in)

For goodness sakes, Ben...what brings you home this time of day?

BEN

The boss left town...and told me to do as I pleased this afternoon.

Want to go for a ride?

IDA

Yes, but...in his car?

BEN

He told me I could use it. Man alive, is he happy! Got some big money-making deal on.

IDA

I wish we had something like that.

BEN (hopefully)

Maybe we will someday, Ida. Seems like all I do is plan...plan for you and the children. And yet, I don't seem to be getting anywhere. If only...

IDA

Now, Ben! Don't be getting morbid. You know we'll come through, somehow.

BEN

Oh, that was why I wanted you to go for a ride. I want to take you out to look at a farm...over near Cheviot.

IDA

I thought you'd given up the idea of getting a farm.





BEN

Not by any means! You know the old saying...men that are brought up on a farm and leave it, always go back. Well, that's what I want to do...go back to a farm. Of course, not like that one we looked at the other day over in Clermont County.

IDA

It was pretty bad. It must have had a hundred gullies if it had one.

BEN

Yep...it was all washed up. I want a farm that hasn't been manhandled...one that still has some soil left on it.

IDA

I know that song by heart. You've been preaching it to me ever since we were married.

BEN

I mean it. And I've been looking for a farm ever since we were married. There's no future in being a chauffeur. I'm just like a fellow running an elevator...he goes up and down, and I go here and there, but don't get anywhere...always come back to home plate. As I grow older, the boss'll want a younger man. I want a place for the children. I want security....and there's nothing as secure as a good farm that's been treated right. That, Ida, is farm security.

ORGAN: LITTLE OLD LADY, Fading behind...



NARRATOR

We went out for a ride that day, out past Westwood, out past Cheviot. It was cold, and it seemed like you could hear the creaking of a barn door a mile away. The sky had the cold blue color of tempered steel. Ben found a farm that he sort of liked, when he happened to meet one of the neighbors. That was one of those coincidences, I guess....

SOUND: Chopping wood, stop as...

MIKE (grunting)

There! That's enough wood to set the...

BEN (fading in)

Enough wood to what?

MIKE

Enough wood to...why, I don't know as it makes any difference.

BEN (laughing)

I couldn't help but hearing you swear under your breath.

MIKE

Well, maybe it wasn't so much under my breath as I thought. If you'd ever tried to split a black locust log for fence posts, maybe you'd know how I feel. That's the trouble with you city folks, you think that....

BEN

Now, hold on there! I was born and raised on a farm. Don't let this chauffeur's uniform fool you. In fact, I'm out here looking for a farm I can buy. Just a small one, of course.

MIKE

Found any you like?

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BEN

Yes, I like that place over there. I'm looking for a farm that hasn't been washed down to bedrock.

MIKE

Listen, Mister...oh, pardon me for not shaking hands with you, but...they're kinda dirty.

BEN

Forget it. My name's Ben Meyer.

MIKE

And mine's Mike Hasselwander.

BEN

Glad to know you, Mr. Hasselwander. Hasselwander...couldn't be German?

MIKE (with mock seriousness)

Oh, no! Hasselwander? Full blood Cherokee Indian! (BOTH LAUGH).

BEN

Seriously, what do you think of that farm?

MIKE

Why, it's a good farm, all right....just about as good as mine. But if you're looking for a bargain, I wish you'd go over there across the ridge and talk to my sister. She has a farm she wants to sell.

BEN

That so?



C

1. The first part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee. The names are written in a cursive hand, and the addresses are written in a more formal, printed hand. The list is organized in a columnar fashion, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

2. The second part of the document is a list of names and addresses of the members of the committee. The names are written in a cursive hand, and the addresses are written in a more formal, printed hand. The list is organized in a columnar fashion, with names in the first column and addresses in the second column.

C

MIKE

Yeah, and it's a darn good farm, too. Her name's Mrs. Weust. Came here as a bride. Lived on that farm 35 years. Well, her husband died, and the children don't want to farm...so I think you might make a pretty good deal. It's a good farm. They've tried to take care of it.

BEN

All right, Mr. Hasselwander....

MIKE

The name is Mike.

BEN

All right, Mike...I'll go over and look at it....

ORGAN: BRIEF BRIDGE, fading....

BEN

This is the place I've been looking for.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

NARRATOR (cold)

Those were happy years, ten years of farming on our little 42-acre place on Thompson Road. Oh, it was hard work, but Robert and the girls...even little Danny pitched in, too...and we all tried to build up the farm.

ORGAN: Sneak in, softly, sombre funeral music...

NARRATOR

Then Ben passed on.

ORGAN: Up with several funeral chords....

IDA (sobbing)

I can't go on. I can't. I can't.

BEN (with filter mike)

You must, Ida. It's still our farm. Our farm--and our children's farm.



IDA (softly)

Yes, our farm...and our children's farm. I will go on, Ben...

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

NARRATOR

We did go on. The children had to pitch in harder and harder, and I'm mighty proud of them. The Farm Security Administration loaned us money to buy fertilizer and lime and seed. They were swell to us, and we're going to make it up to them. The Extension Service showed us how to sow cover crops in our orchards to prevent soil erosion. A fellow named Barney Haskins came down from Hamilton, where he worked for the Soil Conservation Service, and helped us lay out our cropland for strip cropping, so we could keep the soil from washing.

ORGAN: Sneak in LITTLE OLD LADY.

NARRATOR

Oh, this is hard work keeping the farm going, and building it up all the time. But we're building it up--and the children will have it some day, and it won't be all washed up, either. My husband put his life into this place. I can't afford a tombstone for his grave--but I can build up the farm the way he wanted it to--and that will be my monument to him.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of Mrs. Ida Meyer, who farms the steep hills out from Westwood, Ohio. And now, once again we turn to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is Hal Jenkins.





JENKINS

Thanks, \_\_\_\_\_. After that story, I almost hesitate to come on--and I wouldn't, except that I can give you a few more facts about the way Mrs. Meyer is working to save not only her topsoil, but her entire farm. As you well know, the drouth has hit hard in the Miami Valley, and it hasn't missed the Meyer farm. (But I'll say one thing, it hasn't hurt her Blue Damson plums, and you'll see them in the markets at Hamilton, Ohio, this very day.) What I started to say, though, was that when the drouth hit, and Mrs. Meyer had her crops just about burned up...she just started a route to Greenhills, where she and young Danny sell eggs and milk every day. She just won't give up. She'll look at that farm plan the Soil Conservation Service worked out for her, and she'll show you the aerial map of her farm made by the Triple-A, and by that time you'll be convinced that Mrs. Ida Meyer is going to make a success of that farm--for her husband who passed on, and for her six children. She's a conservation farmer.

SOUND: Telegraph key clicking....

ANNOUNCER

News in the Conservation World!



JENKINS

Here's a bit of news from A. J. Sims, the agricultural extension editor down in Tennessee. It's about R. P. Carmack, a farmer from Sullivan County. Mr. Carmack is a unit-demonstrator cooperating with the Extension Service and with TVA.

Well, J. W. McClain, the assistant county agent in Sullivan County, asked Mr. Carmack to try some triple superphosphate last fall. He did, and the application almost doubled the yield of clover and timothy hay. The entire field had been limed in 1938, and it was divided into two parts, just for a test. Both parts were seeded at the same time, both had been preceded by similar crops. But the half that received the superphosphate yielded almost twice the weight of hay compared to the untreated plot. That's a good word for superphosphate, and that, by the way, is conservation farming.

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

JENKINS

This is Hal Jenkins, speaking for the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is an invitation to be with us again next Saturday, when we swing down into Louisiana, the "Evangeline country", for another story of "Fortunes Washed Away."

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

